

SPECIAL SESSION RUSH COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MAY 4, 2018

The Rush County Board of Commissioners met in special session Friday, May 4, 2018 with Commissioners Paul Wilkinson, Mark Bacon, and Bruce Levi, Jodi Harr, Auditor, and Leigh Morning, County Attorney, in attendance.

Paul Wilkinson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. with the Pledge to the flag.

Roll Call was taken for county council members who were present. In attendance were Steve McCorkle, Warren Norris, Charles Smith, Janet Kile and Scott Barnes joined the meeting at 9:38 a.m.

The purpose of the special session was to discuss the EMS study for Rush County conducted by Fitch & Associates. Thomas Moore with Fitch & Associates was present via teleconference to go over the report and answer questions. The entire report is available in the Auditor's office. Moore did highlight the following comments/recommendations in the report:

- Reducing the amount of subsidy provided is not a reasonable option if the County desires to maintain current service levels.
- Establish fractile (90th percentile compliance) response time requirements for life-threatening, non-life-threatening and non-life-threatening/non-urgent responses.
- Consider implementing monitoring system that enables key leadership the ability to monitor and evaluate system performance and initiate adjustments when necessary. At a minimum the response times of each agency need to be provided each month to both the County and the Agency.
- A single system-wide Medical Director, should be responsible for all EMS clinical activity, as well as the operation and revision of the EMS system from initial patient access to turnover of patient care. Possibly have both Medical Directors work together.
- Clinical outcomes of the EMS system should routinely be provided to system stakeholders.
- Develop comprehensive performance-based agreements with the EMS agencies to require defined performances (e.g. response times, 911 notification/to be dispatched, and minimum availability) and penalties for poor or non-performance.
- The County should provide an internal monthly report of first responder and ambulance response times to all key system stakeholders.
- Designate a County staff member to oversee EMS System performance and activities.
- Enact a County ordinance that defines performance measures for EMS System providers and defines the roles, essential duties and responsibilities of County staff members tasked with system oversight.

Councilman Steve McCorkle asked Moore if the summary of the report is that you cannot manage what you cannot document. Moore replied. That is correct. You have to be able to measure what you are managing.

Jeremy Green from Carthage Fire Department asked if Moore was recommending that all departments operate the same. Moore replied given the differences between volunteer and paid services, the departments should still operate as similar as possible. Citizens need to be assured that from the time the call is dispatched, EMS arrival, care and transport is going to be the same. Green asked if he was indicating that each service be given the same dollar amount so they can pay their staff and that volunteers be done away with? Moore answered no. Agencies should meet the same established performance requirements but how to achieve the performance requirements be determined by each agency.

Brad Hatfield from Raleigh Fire Department asked if Moore looked at both sets of protocols being used in the county. Moore answered yes. He understands the fears of requiring a paramedic for every call. The purpose is not to drive a particular level of care but to give guidance as to when to request an ALS provider or to use the most appropriate level of care. Hatfield asked for outlying departments, which set of protocols is the best? Moore replied neither set is better than the other. Both sets can be improved by having those responsible for medical oversight work together to improve/develop a common set of protocols to make one set of very clear protocols. Hatfield asked what the national percent of ALS care needed on 911 calls. Moore answered less than two percent will be ALS necessary.

Jason Cain from Raleigh Fire Department asked in Moore's experience has he seen the medical Director be an employee of one service and does this create a bias toward other services. Moore commented that is where the County oversight is needed. They would monitor any bias between departments. Cain asked if the County coordinator would oversee the medical directors. Moore answered disputes would be reviewed by the County coordinator.

Steve Cain from Raleigh Fire Department asked Moore if he sensed a feeling of trust between the paid and volunteer providers in our county. Moore answered the individuals providing the care for the patients seem to have a good trust. He would guess the level of trust between the agencies is fair.

Commissioner Mark Bacon asked if the two percent ALS calls would pertain to Rush County. Moore does not have that information. It would be hard to get for Rush County because Rush Memorial Hospital responds to all of their calls with ALS while other providers respond with BLS. You would need to review every call to determine if ALS was needed.

Andrew Siler with Rush Memorial Hospital believes Moore did a great job of analyzing the EMS services in Rush County. He asked what the best way to have a positive impact on our current system would be. Moore replied set up the EMS frame work so that everyone is on the

same page and the same playing field. The County should adopt an ordinance outlining their expectations. Once that is done, other improvements will follow.

Commissioner Paul Wilkinson offered the following summary:

- It will take some time to put the recommendations in place.
- There is not a problem with patient care.
- Financial resources are limited.
- The commissioners will make sure protocols are set up and make sure county tax dollars are being used for what is being paid for.

Bruce Levi made the motion to adjourn. Mark Bacon seconded. Motion carried.

Paul Wilkinson Chairman

Mark Bacon

Bruce Levi

ATTEST:

Jodi Harr, Auditor